

Legislation seeks clearer U.S. nanotechnology plan

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WASHINGTON — Legislation introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday (Oct. 17) would establish an industry advisory panel to help the government devise an investment strategy for nanotechnology.

Chief sponsor Rep. Mike Honda, D-Calif., said industry and university experts would serve on the nanotechnology advisory committee. The group would help determine investments and goals for the U.S. National Nanotechnology Initiative, Honda said.

The proposal is made in response to a recent National Research Council review that warned of little industry input on how the nanotechnology initiative is organized. The bill calls for an advisory panel to help draw up short-, medium- and long-term strategies in five-year increments over the next decade. The board would submit an annual report to the president and Congress on research progress and spending on nanotechnology by government agencies.

The U.S. nanotechnology initiative aims to develop a national strategy for boosting research in the field estimated to be worth \$1 trillion by 2015. Thirteen federal agencies participate in the initiative. The semiconductor industry and universities pushed hard in the late 1990s for federal funding to boost nanotechnology research.

"The federal government's nanotechnology strategy must have clear goals and metrics to assess our country's progress," said Honda, whose district includes San Jose, Calif.

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